

Applicants' claimed invention is directed to an arrangement for preparing a liquid treatment solution for treating photosensitive material, including: a supply portion for supplying one or more dry components; a reception container for storing a solvent such as water; a storage container for storing **treatment solution** to be fed to a treating compartment; and an additional mixing tank connected to the supply portion, the reception container, and the storage container, wherein the treatment solution is prepared in the mixing tank based on the dry components received from the supply portion and the solvent received from the reception container.

The above-described arrangement can provide significant benefits. Because the supply portion containing dry components and the reception container containing solvent are each connected to an additional mixing tank, treatment solution can be prepared in the mixing tank such that the treatment solution is automatically supplied to the storage container when a fresh supply of treatment solution is withdrawn from the storage container. The "treatment solution" contained in the mixing tank, which is prepared by mixing the dry components and solvent, is substantially the same as the "treatment solution" stored and withdrawn from the storage container. The treatment solution in the mixing tank has the same physical and chemical properties as the treatment solution stored in the storage container.

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,416,552 to Fakler. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Fakler fails to teach or suggest an arrangement for preparing a liquid treatment solution for treating photosensitive material which includes an additional mixing tank in which treatment solution is prepared, the treatment solution in the mixing tank being the same as the treatment solution in the storage container.

Fakler discloses an apparatus for replenishing a developer solution, the developer solution being mixed from liquid concentrate and tap water. As shown in FIG. 1, a meter 10 monitors the pH level of developer solution contained within a sump 11. If the pH falls below a preset value, then a pump 14 is activated to transfer solution from a tank 15 into the sump 11 (see

column 3, lines 26-31). Therefore, the tank 15 contains developer solution having a different pH level than the pH of the developer solution contained within the sump 11. These different pH levels indicate different physical and/or chemical properties between the "developer solution" in the sump 11 and the "developer solution" in the tank 15.

In contrast, the Applicants' claimed invention recites an additional mixing tank in which the prepared treatment solution has substantially the same physical and chemical properties of the treatment solution in the storage container. Specifically, claim 1 recites "treatment solution" that is prepared in the mixing tank; the same "treatment solution" is stored in the storage container. Thus, when a "fresh supply" of treatment solution is withdrawn from the storage container, it can be replaced by substantially the same treatment solution from the mixing container. The additional mixing tank recited in Applicants' claimed invention ensures that the replacement of treatment solution occurs automatically, without delay in replacing substantially identical treatment solution.

It is believed the application is in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

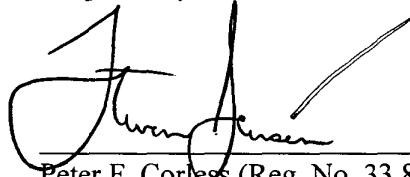
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Phone: (617) 439-4444

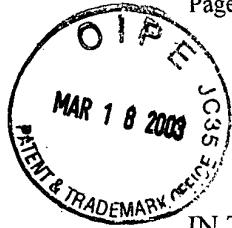
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Respectfully submitted,



Peter F. Corless (Reg. No. 33,860)
Steven M. Jensen (Reg. No. 42,693)
Dike Bronstein, Roberts & Cushman
Intellectual Property Practice Group
EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP
P.O. Box 9169
Boston, MA 02209



APPENDIX A:
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 6-8 have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) An arrangement for preparing a liquid treatment solution for treating photosensitive material, such as photosensitive film material or photosensitive paper material, comprising:

a) a storage container for storing said treatment solution to be fed to a [development] treating compartment of a treating apparatus;

b) a supply portion for a dry component or dry components and/or dry mixtures of components of said treatment solution;

c) a reception container for receiving and storing a solvent[, such as water or distilled water]; and

d) [a] an additional mixing tank being located between and connected to said supply portion, said reception container and said storage container, wherein [said supply portion, said reception container and said storage container are connected to said mixing tank] the treatment solution is prepared in the mixing tank based on the dry components received from the supply portion and the solvent received from the reception container.

6. (Amended) An arrangement according to claim 1, wherein the storage container is connected to [the] a development compartment via a conduit through which said treatment solution can be transported.

7. (Amended) An arrangement according to claim 6, wherein said development compartment includes at least one sensor indicating when to change said treatment solution, said at least one sensor emitting a replenishment signal initiating the transfer of said treatment solution from said storage container to said development [department] compartment.

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8. (Amended) An arrangement according to claim 1, wherein said mixing tank is emptied into said storage container after the storage container has been emptied into said [development] treating compartment.